

criminal examinations as much as in "every day cases" (380). It would have been more even more effectively prevented had alienists known what they known today, or been able to act on what they knew then. Clarke's opinion of the Canadian public in general, and of Canadian legal methods in particular, is scarcely more "optimistic" than his opinion of the Metis (II, 14). Like other kinds of "criminal" behavior, Riel's revolutionary activity must have had a hereditary origin. Since, as Clarke observes with some complacency, Riel had little "Indian blood" (380), he must have inherited his rebelliousness from his father, who had himself rebelled against the Hudson Bay Company's monopoly of the fur trade.

Certain elements and incidents in Riel's story are isolated and interpreted in a way that makes them damning. Clarke mentions Riel's precocity, even his unpopularity with his school mates -- as if retroactively (and posthumously) diagnosing the visionary leader with dementia praecox. Riel's enthusiastic correspondence with Archbishop Tache becomes evidence of "the mental unbalance which characterized the remainder of his life" (381), and the Archbishop's conviction that Riel was unsuited for the priesthood becomes evidence of an "unbalanced" mental condition that made him unsuited for everything. Clarke informs us that Riel's delusions were "marked," without telling us what they were.

Clarke describes Riel's visiting the home of a wealthy Montrealer to ask for money to support him in one of his crusades, as virtually a case of "break and enter." His obtaining money from his mother, depicted as pitifully "old" and "poor," is proof of delusional egotism, as he heartlessly exploits her, induces her to take a long "tiresome" journey at the end of which he fails to appear, etc. In Clarke's narrative, when the abuses of the Dominion Government first come to Riel's attention in 1869, he is already an "ill-balanced youth."

After the failure of the first rebellion and a brief period of exile in the United States, Riel makes a disturbance in a Montreal church in 1876. Asserting his authority over everyone else present, Riel insists on conducting the service himself. He is arrested, and subsequently committed to Longue Point asylum and thereafter to Beauport Asylum under the care of Dr. Roy, who diagnoses him with "megalomania" (383). Clarke makes no attempt to connect this episode with Riel's long preparation for the priesthood or his recent experience